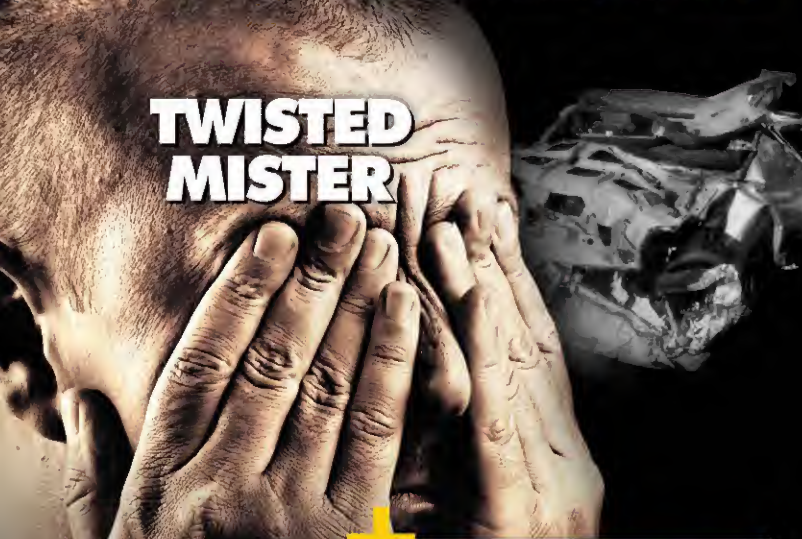
RANGE SAFETY: A LESSON LEARNED

KNOWLEDGE

VOL 4 NOVEMBER 2010

OFFICIAL SAFETY MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. ARMY



TWISTED MISTER

- WHEN TRAINING BECOMES TOO REAL
- RAISING THE BAR
- ALONG FOR THE RIDE

DEEP-FRIED DISASTER

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ARMY STRONG.

THE BAND OF BROTHERS & SISTERS

WHICH ONE ARE YOU?

IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS AND DETERMINE IF YOU OR YOUR FRIENDS ARE AT RISK

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KNOWLEDGE
OFFICIAL SAFETY MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. ARMY
LEADERS SOLDIERS FAMILIES

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U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER

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Mission statement: The United States Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center (USACR/Safety Center) supports our Army by collecting, analyzing and communicating actionable information to assist Leaders, Soldiers, Families and Civilians in preserving/protecting our Army's combat resources.

We welcome your feedback. Please e-mail comments to **safe.knowledge@conus.army.mil**.

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Knowledge provides a forum for Soldiers, Leaders and safety professionals to share best practices and lessons learned and maintain safety awareness. The views expressed in these articles are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Army, Department of Defense or the U.S. Government Contents are specifically for accident prevention purposes only. Photos and artwork are representative and do not necessarily show the people or equipment discussed. Reference to commercial products does not imply Army endorsement. Unless otherwise stated, material in this magazine may be reprinted without permission; please credit the magazine and author.

GIVING THANKS, LOOKING A

This month, we honor the sacrifices of our men and women in uniform, past and present, and give thanks for the many blessings that distinguish the United States among all other nations in the world. I personally am thankful for the opportunity to serve alongside the Soldiers, Families and Civilians of this great Army. Each of you makes a tremendous impact every day, and I continue to be humbled by your service and sacrifice.

We have much to be thankful for as an Army. This past September, we officially transitioned from a combat mission to an advisory and assistance role in Iraq, marking the conclusion of more than seven years of armed conflict there and the transition to an Iraqi-led mission. Every member of our Army Family — Soldiers and Leaders on the front lines and those in support roles at the rear, loved ones maintaining watch at home and Civilian employees providing the foundation for sustained operations — has played a vital part in bringing this outstanding accomplishment to fruition. As we refocus our full attention to our continued role in Afghanistan, rely on the experience and knowledge you've gained thus far and the expertise of those around you to keep all your Soldiers safe and in the fight.

November is also the time of year we begin to compile the data outlining our Army's safety performance during the previous fiscal year. The good news is that, in fiscal 2010, we did not see a significant increase in Soldier fatalities following the historic reductions made in fiscal 2009. In safety, we always say a loss is a loss, no matter how it happens. But on the flip side, every Soldier saved is a Soldier saved, whether it's attributed to engaged leadership, intervention by Family and friends or simply increased awareness by the Soldier through education and training. We've learned over the past two years that all three of these measures work, but clearly the most important constant that time and again makes the largest difference across our Army is engaged leadership. The most critical point of this engagement is at the lowest level, where Leaders know their Soldiers the best. The senior Leader's role is not only to also remain engaged, but to support their subordinate Leaders through mentorship and example.

The hectic holiday season will get underway soon, and I ask that you redouble your efforts in keeping both yourself and your Soldiers, whether subordinates or peers, safe. The long holiday weekends observing Veterans Day and Thanksgiving Day will offer plenty of time for road trips, leisurely excursions close to home and food and fellowship with Family and friends. Use every tool in your safety arsenal to ensure everyone makes

TRAVEL RISK

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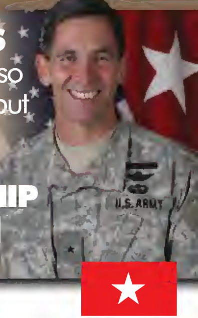
HEAD

> "The senior LEADER'S ROLE is not only to also remain ENGAGED, but to SUPPORT their subordinate Leaders through MENTORSHIP and EXAMPLE."



it back safely after the holiday, and start by talking to your Soldiers about their plans. You might be surprised at how open they'll be, so take advantage of this time to offer suggestions for mitigating the risks associated with each Soldier's scheduled activities. The new "comments" feature on the Travel Risk Planning System presents a great opportunity for subordinates and supervisors to open a dialogue on driving safety. Check out the tool at https://safety.army.mil.

By now, the chill of fall and winter can be felt in nearly every location our Army operates. Cooler temperatures and severe winter weather create hazards for our Army team both on and off duty, especially when working outside or driving on slippery roads. The USACR/Safety Center recently launched this year's Fall/Winter Safety Campaign ("No Time to Chill") to provide Leaders, safety officers and Soldiers vital information for staying safe during fall and winter activities. The 2010 campaign kit includes feature articles, posters and videos promoting awareness and mitigation of fall and winter hazards. All campaign products can be viewed and downloaded via the USACR/Safety Center website. Also be sure to encourage the hunters in your unit to visit the Firearms Safety Techniques challenge available on our website. While the challenge does not replace hunter education classes, it is a great awareness tool for weapons enthusiasts and hunters alike.

I thank you again for your contributions to the accomplishments of this past year and what you do every day for our Soldiers, Families and Civilians. Take that same passion forward in fiscal 2011, and remember to always stay engaged, stay informed and stay safe in everything you do. And wherever your plans take you, have a great November!«

Army Safe is Army Strong!

WILLIAM T. WOLF
Brigadier General, USA
Director of Army Safety

Don't Let Com
Sneak Up on Y

A dictionary defines complacency as "contented to a fault; self-satisfied and unconcerned." To a pilot, these traits are undesirable and could have deadly results. Yet, many accidents occur every year with the primary cause determined to be "pilot complacency."

Just because we do something repeatedly doesn't make it any less dangerous. I want to share a story about complacency in the cockpit, which occurred when I was a Chinook instructor pilot (IP) in the Army.

My job consisted of teaching various helicopter operations procedures to flight students and then evaluating them. One of the more dangerous areas is simulating an engine failure. This procedure is even more dangerous when using night vision goggles (NVG). When performing a simulated engine failure, the IP retards the engine condition lever (throttle) and, by doing so, risks the possibility of the engine actually failing or the student responding incorrectly. Therefore, it is imperative the IP maintain a high level of awareness.

As time went on, my experience level and confidence as an IP flourished. One night, I was to fly with a pilot using NVG to prepare him for NVG refresher training. The pilot had about 75 hours of flight time using the goggles, but he hadn't flown with them in two years. I knew the pilot well, had about 15 hours of flight time with him and had progressed him to readiness level one (RL1). I began his training with NVG, and he was well prepared. The next step was to hit the flightline.

placency ou

RETIRED CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 JAMES K. SCALA
Redstone Arsenal, Ala.

Ready to Go

After the daily ritual of preflight, flight planning and checking weather, we were ready to go. It was a beautiful night — you could see every star and the moon was about 60 percent illuminated. Not a cloud in sight and the forecast was "severe clear."

We climbed into the cockpit and began the run-up process. Before long, we were beating the air into submission. For his first flight in two years, he was hovering very well. We soon took off from the base station and flew to a small airfield about 20 minutes away. I had performed many NVG training flights at this small airfield. Although it was late and the tower had already closed, I had communication with crash/rescue, a requirement of U.S. Army regulations before conducting emergency procedures training.

After conducting a couple of traffic patterns with no interference from me, I was ready to see how he could handle emergency procedures. Since he was doing so well, I started with a simulated single-engine failure. After all, I had given him the same emergency procedure numerous times during the day and he had performed fine.

With the before-takeoff checks complete, the pilot increased the thrust and off we went. On the downwind leg of the traffic pattern at 700 feet, traffic pattern altitude, I initiated the emergency procedure by retarding the No. 2 engine condition lever to ground idle. The pilot called out the first step of the emergency procedure, "Thrust adjust." Normally, the thrust is reduced to regain rotor RPM. I sat back and waited for the completion of the procedure when I noticed the rotor RPM continued to decrease to a dangerous point in which the main generators go offline. I then looked over and noticed he had increased the thrust.

Before I knew it, the aircraft was out of control. I announced, "I have the controls." The pilot became unresponsive and unwilling to relinquish the controls. I continued increasing the rotor RPM to within safe limits, but the attempt to recover the engine was ineffective. I noticed our climb rate had increased from 2,000 to 2,500 feet per minute and the altimeter had risen rapidly. Again, I said, "I have the flight controls!" but the pilot still would not relinquish the controls.

What is Going On?

The flight engineer, growing concerned, said, "What is going on?" as he felt the aircraft going out of control. I looked outside the window and all I could see were stars, indicating we were

now in a nose-high attitude. Suddenly, the pilot let go of the controls and I reduced the thrust and regained control of the aircraft. After establishing a level flight attitude, I noticed we had climbed from 700 to 3,000 feet in what seemed like a matter of seconds. The pilot asked, "What happened?"

I recovered the engine and proceeded to land the aircraft. Once on the ground, I explained to the crew what had happened. After we all had a chance to catch our breath, I demonstrated the simulated engine failure, discussed it in detail and the pilot trainee performed another without error.

After the flight, I mentally went over the portion of the flight that will be forever etched in my memory. I was slow to react to a potentially deadly situation because I was complacent and unprepared for what happened. I had performed the procedure many times with this same pilot under a different flight mode, and he performed it flawlessly. I should not have taken such a lax position in the cockpit, knowing the pilot at the flight controls was not familiar with this flight mode.

After experiencing so many uneventful simulated emergency procedures, it took an alarming situation to reveal how complacent I'd become. Thomas Carlyle, a Scottish essayist, said, "The greatest of faults, I should say, is to be conscious of none." This is true today, as it was when he wrote it in the 19th century. Complacency can sneak up on you. Don't get too comfortable and let it take over.«

> "After **EXPERIENCING** so many uneventful simulated emergency procedures, it **TOOK** an **ALARMING SITUATION** to reveal how **COMPLACENT I'D BECOME.**"

ARE YOU READY?

Wouldn't you like to know if your unit is about to experience a mishap?

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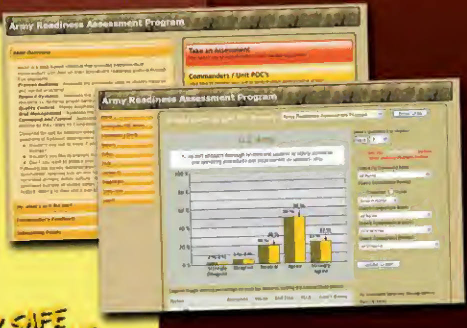
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WHEN TRAINING BECOMES TOO RE

SGT. TIMOTHY T. SANK JR.
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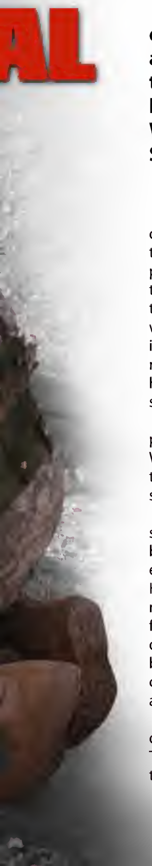
Edgewood, Md.



It was a brisk October morning, and we were into our second week of military police field training at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa. We'd been practicing military operations on urban terrain (MOUT) tactics for several days. Our equipment consisted of all the vehicles and weapons a military police platoon would have. We were having a great time and feeling a little invincible. Our confidence level was high because all of our iterations had gone off without a hitch. We'd even done some unscheduled rappelling operations. Safety was the last thought on anyone's mind.

Eventually, the time came for force-on-force exercises, which allowed us to combine all of the skills we'd been practicing. We would be entering into the MOUT site for some squad individual tactics. The "opposing force" (OPFOR) would consist of no more than three individuals, and our job would be to neutralize any threats. Both sides would have weapons with blank ammunition, smoke grenades and grenade simulators.

My squad was up first and performed all of our tactics flawlessly. We eliminated the threats in record time. Everyone was really pumped as second squad readied for its turn.

In an effort to outdo us, second squad decided to change up things a bit. Rather than have their two teams enter the town on foot while their M1025 HMMWVs maintained overwatch — as my squad had done — the plan called for one of the HMMWVs to drive slowly down the road while the teams moved behind it. The HMMWV would act as concealment from the OPFOR, which, at the time, sounded like a good idea.

The M1025 crew was simple; just a driver and an M240B machine-gunner. The vehicle commander was outside with the teams so he could better coordinate the exercise. As the squad entered the town complex, a member of the OPFOR team stepped out from behind a building and skittered a grenade simulator down the road toward the front of the HMMWV. Unfortunately, the inexperienced driver panicked. She threw the vehicle in reverse and stomped on the gas to escape the grenade. The vehicle lurched backward, causing the two teams who were following close behind to scatter.

However, one Soldier did not get out of the way quickly enough. He was knocked to the ground and the vehicle began to run over him. The rear driver-side wheel came up his right leg, causing an open compound fracture of his tibia and fibula. The HMMWV continued to travel up the Soldier's body, crushing his right hip and pelvis, and then ran across his abdomen and onto his chest, breaking several ribs and puncturing a lung. The vehicle finally came to rest on the left side of his upper chest, breaking his left clavicle.

Everyone was screaming at the poor, confused driver that she had parked on top of a Soldier. Still in a state of panic, she threw the vehicle back into gear and stomped on the gas again, peeling off the Soldier. I, a trained paramedic, and another Soldier, who was a trained emergency medical technician, rushed to the injured Soldier so we could stabilize him until an ambulance arrived. The Soldier was then transported to a local medical center, where he spent several hours in surgery.

The moral of this story is that even something as simple as routine training can be dangerous. We were out there to learn and ended up losing two Soldiers to a training accident. Neither the injured Soldier nor the driver was ever able to return to duty.

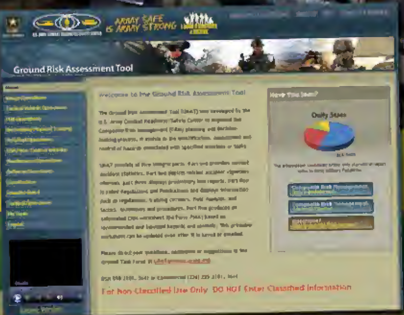
No one had thought about safety that day. We hadn't given a safety brief, nor had we appointed someone as a safety officer. No one wanted to volunteer to take on the extra responsibility of safety. We also failed to identify all the hazards, such as having an inexperienced vehicle operator who had not rehearsed the mission. In addition, Leaders never talked about potential threats and what the proper responses to those threats would be.

Sadly, the principles of composite risk management were never used, which led to a tough lesson learned. It doesn't matter where or how a loss occurs, the result is the same — decreased combat power or mission effectiveness.«

GRAT

GROUND RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL

https://safety.army.mil



Welcome to the Ground Risk Assessment Tool

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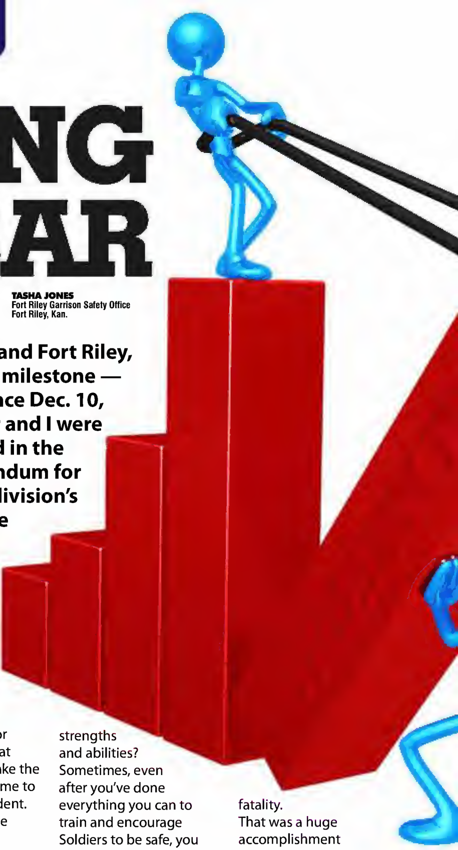
RAISING THE BAR



TASHA JONES
Fort Riley Garrison Safety Office
Fort Riley, Kan.

The 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley, Kan., had just reached a milestone — 500 fatality-free days since Dec. 10, 2008. My safety director and I were discussing this achievement and in the process of preparing a memorandum for a well-deserved day off for the division's Soldiers and Fort Riley. Then, the unthinkable happened.

It was early the following morning when the Fort Riley Operations Center notified us of a privately owned vehicle (POV) fatality. The preliminary findings of the accident investigation revealed the Soldier, who was not wearing his seat belt, had crossed the centerline and struck another vehicle head-on. We were devastated. The whole intent of the Fatality Free Day celebration was to appreciate life. This tragic death was a sobering reminder that accidents could still happen. Although we couldn't recover the lost Soldier, we could try to prevent another loss. But the question was, "How?"

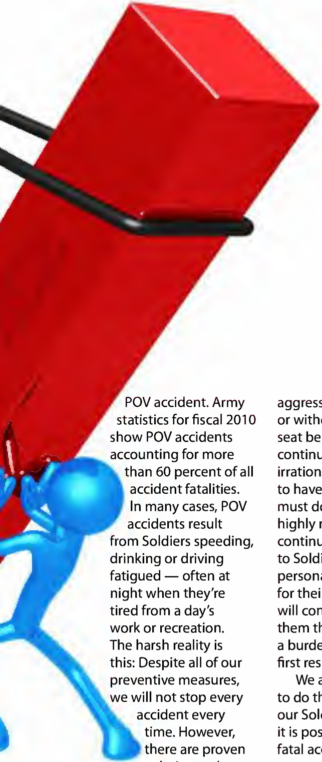
Refocusing

My safety director strongly believes that good Leaders will take the responsibility and time to understand an accident. For example, was the accident due to the Soldier poorly executing a good plan? Was it due to lack of support from other supervisors? Was it due to a lack of training? What was the Soldier's state of mind — was he angry, hostile or depressed? Did he overestimate his strengths and abilities? Sometimes, even after you've done everything you can to train and encourage Soldiers to be safe, you still come up short. Then what? What more can you do to prevent these tragic accidents?

We decided to refocus our leadership efforts. Despite the tragedy we'd suffered, we'd still made it 500 days without a fatality. That was a huge accomplishment that emphasized the successful efforts of Leaders and the garrison safety personnel to reduce accidents.

Resetting

Every 72 hours, a Soldier is killed in a



POV accident. Army statistics for fiscal 2010 show POV accidents accounting for more than 60 percent of all accident fatalities. In many cases, POV accidents result from Soldiers speeding, drinking or driving fatigued — often at night when they're tired from a day's work or recreation. The harsh reality is this: Despite all of our preventive measures, we will not stop every accident every time. However, there are proven techniques that help reduce fatalities.

We know repetition is essential to learning, so we will continue emphasizing not driving distracted, under the influence of drugs or alcohol, aggressively, fatigued or without wearing a seat belt. We will also continue to refute the irrational belief that to have fun, Soldiers must do something highly risky. We will continue emphasizing to Soldiers that they are personally responsible for their own safety. We will continue to teach them that safety is not a burden — it's their first responsibility.

We are determined to do these things for our Soldiers because it is possible to reduce fatal accidents and prevent the resulting grief to families, friends and fellow Soldiers. We had made it 500 days, so it is possible to be successful and effective. Our goal is now to raise the bar even higher. Our Soldiers deserve it.«

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ARMY SAFE IS ARMY STRONG

Deep-Fried Disaster

MASTER SGT. VINCENT L. WILSON
3rd Marine Regiment
Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii

This Thanksgiving, many Americans will choose frying over roasting when it comes time to cook their turkey. When done right, the result is a moist, tender bird. When done wrong, your holiday plans — and maybe even your house — can go up in flames.

It was a brisk autumn morning and my father was outside, preparing to cook his famous Cajun-fried turkey for a family gathering. He had made a name for himself among his friends, co-workers and neighbors for his delicious fried turkeys. In fact, his fried turkeys were so good that he even won the $1,000 grand prize at our community's annual fall festival cookout.

As dad got the fire going, he noticed he needed more deep-frying peanut oil and sent me to the garage to grab another bottle. I told him we were out of peanut oil, so he decided to use vegetable oil. He normally never deviated from his recipe of 100 percent peanut oil, but he was in a hurry to finish before our guests arrived.

Everything seemed to be going well when it started to rain, which caused the oil in the fryer to splatter more than usual. Dad quickly moved the fryer under the patio to keep the rain out. That did the trick, but not before oil had coated the patio walls and ground. Once the oil had reached its proper cooking temperature, he placed the turkey inside the fryer. Suddenly, the fryer was engulfed in flames. Before it was able to spread, however, dad put out the flames and saved our home — thanks to the training he received on the proper use of fire extinguishers.

Fortunately, no one was injured that day and there was no damage to our home. Others, however, haven't been so lucky. Each year, the improper use of turkey fryers results in numerous burn injuries and property damage.

According to safety experts at Underwriters Laboratories (UL), backyard chefs who plan to fry their turkey this holiday season may be sacrificing safety for good taste. Because of the organization's concern over increased reports of fires related to turkey fryer use, UL has not certified any with its trusted "UL" symbol. Some of the potential hazards listed by UL include:

- Many units could tip over, spilling gallons of hot oil.
- It is easy to overfill the cooking pot with oil. If this happens, oil may spill out of the unit when the turkey is placed into the cooking pot. Oil may hit the burner and possibly cause a fire.
- Partially frozen turkeys placed into the fryer pot can cause a spillover effect. This, too, may result in a fire.
- With no thermostat controls, the turkey fryers have the potential to overheat the oil to the point of combustion.
- The sides of the cooking pot, lid and handles get dangerously hot, posing severe burn hazards.

There are currently several electric

DID YOU KNOW?

Cooking fires peak on Thanksgiving Day. Most fires from turkey fryers occur while the oil is being heated, before the turkey is added.

Source: Firesafety.gov

turkey fryers on the market that provide the same deep-fried deliciousness without the propane and flames. Some of these products can even be used indoors, which is a major no-no for conventional turkey fryers. For those who still plan to fry their bird this Thanksgiving on an outdoor gas cooker, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) recommends the following safety guidelines:

- Keep the fryer in full view while the burner is on.
- Place the fryer in an open area away from all walls, fences or other structures.
- Never use the fryer in, on or under a garage, breezeway, carport, porch or any structure that can catch fire.
- Raise and lower the food slowly to reduce splatter and avoid burns.
- Cover bare skin when adding or removing food.
- Check the oil temperature frequently.
- If the oil begins to smoke, immediately turn off the gas supply.
- If a fire occurs, immediately call 911. Do not attempt to extinguish the fire with water.

For safest operation, the CPSC recommends consumers follow these guidelines as they prepare to use a turkey fryer:

- Make sure there is at least two feet of space between the propane tank and fryer burner.
- Place the propane tank and fryer so that any wind blows the heat of the fryer away from the tank.
- Center the pot over the burner on the cooker.
- Completely thaw (the U.S. Department of Agriculture says 24 hours for every four to five pounds) and dry the turkey before cooking. Partially frozen and/or wet turkeys can produce excessive splatter when added to the oil.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions to determine the proper amount of oil to add.

Following the close call at our house, my father reviewed his emergency action plan, which stated that he was never supposed to cook under the patio in the first place. He was in such a hurry to get the turkey cooked before our guests arrived that he failed to follow his own safety rules. Be extra vigilant this holiday season and keep these safety tips in mind before frying your Thanksgiving turkey. It only takes one mistake to turn your holiday celebration into a deep-fried disaster.«

FILL 'ER UP!

So what is the proper amount of oil to deep-fry a turkey? Your fryer's instruction manual should tell you exactly how much you'll need. If you don't have the instructions, the Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends you follow these steps:

- **Place the turkey in the pot.**
- **Fill the pot with water until the turkey is covered by about a half-inch.**
- **Remove and dry the turkey.**
- **Mark the water level, dump the water, dry the pot and fill with oil to the marked level.**

SaFe Holidays!

Army Safe is Army Strong and that starts with a Soldier's Family. Have the information to help you and your Family stay SAFE.

Family engagement Kit

https://safety.army.mil

Be prepared this holiday season and get your own Family Engagement Kit

TODAY!

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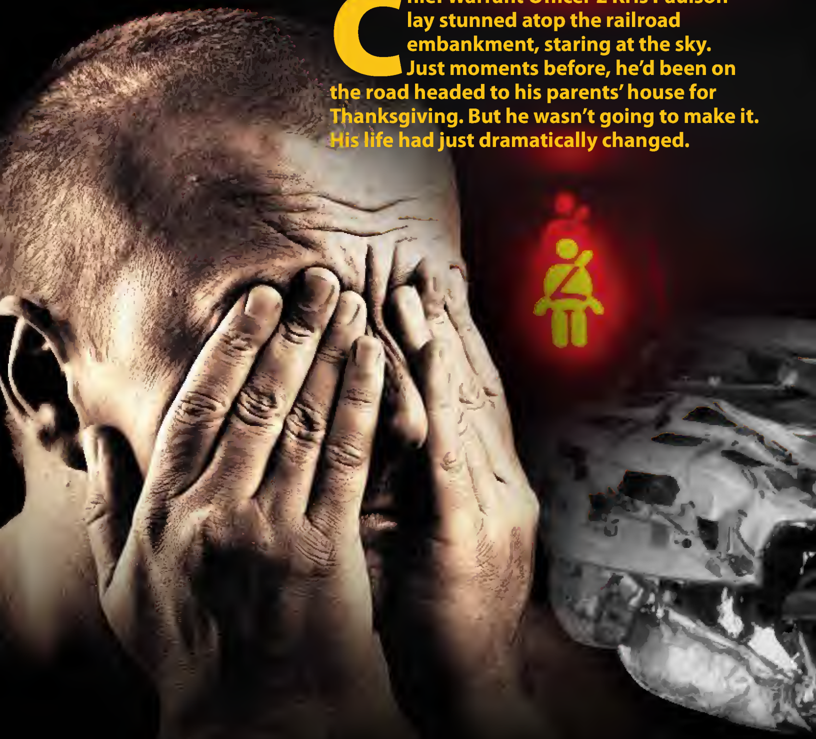
TWISTED

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Kris Paulson lay stunned atop the railroad embankment, staring at the sky. Just moments before, he'd been on the road headed to his parents' house for Thanksgiving. But he wasn't going to make it. His life had just dramatically changed.



MISTER

BOB VAN ELSBERG
Strategic Communication Directorate
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center
Fort Rucker, Ala.

Originally, the young Kentucky Army National Guard Apache pilot had planned to spend Thanksgiving at home in Louisville, Ky., doing some house repairs. However, his dad called and asked him to come to Flint, Mich., to spend the holiday with his family. That meant a six-hour drive, so Paulson called a buddy who owned a Hyundai Sonata with the idea of swapping his gas-guzzling SUV for the more economical car. His friend agreed and they met at Fort Knox, Ky., and traded keys.

Paulson had already packed for the trip and took off an hour early. As the afternoon wore into the evening, he munched sunflower seeds to keep himself awake behind the wheel. Still, in his tired condition he missed the interchange from Interstate 65 to I-69 in Indianapolis. When he saw he was approaching Lafayette, Ind., he realized his mistake and called an old Army buddy he'd served with in Iraq to see if he could spend the night.

Paulson got to his friend's house about 8 p.m. Ideally, he should have gone to bed early enough to be well-rested for the next day. But that's not how things went. Happy to see each other again, Paulson and his friend drank a few beers and then went to a bar. Before they left the bar, Paulson drank a Samuel Adams Utopias — a beer with a 27 percent alcohol content. Neither was in any condition to drive, so they took a taxi back to the house and went to sleep.

Paulson woke up about 9 a.m. and quietly packed up his gear and left. Pulling onto a two-lane road that would take him to I-69, he tried to make up time by speeding. He'd barely gotten onto the road when another driver pulled out in front of him.

"I slammed onto my brakes and my sunflower seeds flew off the passenger seat onto the floor where I couldn't reach them," he said. "I unbuckled my seat belt, reached down, picked them up and kept on going. I never put my seat belt back on — I never thought about it. … I'm sure I would have thought about it eventually."

But "eventually" never came. About 20 minutes later, tired and feeling the effects of the previous night's drinking, he fell asleep and drifted toward the right shoulder. Startled when his tires hit the rumble strip, he jerked the wheel to the left. Realizing he'd overcorrected, he swerved to the right, sending the Sonata across the shoulder and down a railroad embankment. As the Sonata hit the bottom, its front end smashed into the railroad tracks, sending the car tumbling end over end. Unbelted, Paulson flew around inside the car, bouncing off the seats and roof. Then something even more dramatic happened.

"I remember the power of centrifugal force, angels, God — whatever — sucking me out of the car," he said. "I shot right out the sunroof."

Paulson cartwheeled

"**UNBELTED**, Paulson **FLEW** aroun
BOUNCING off the **SEATS** and R
even **MORE** dramatic **HAPPENED**

through the air, landing on top of the far side of the embankment. As he lifted his head to check for injuries, he was shocked to see his heels — not his toes — pointing skyward. From the waist down he'd literally been twisted backward.

He said, "I dislocated and decompressed my spine in two places. I broke five vertebrae and eight ribs — five of which I shattered. I bruised my lungs … and from my bellybutton down I couldn't feel anything."

Paulson reached into his coat pocket for his cell phone and tried, unsuccessfully, to call his friend. Paulson said, "I never thought about calling 911. … I didn't know where I was, so it wouldn't do them any good. What was I going to say? 'I'm somewhere here in Indiana on the ground — you're going to have a hard time finding me.'"

But someone did find him. Ken Werts, Indiana's golf coach of the year, saw the crashed car's taillights and stopped to see what had happened. Approaching the wreck, he saw Paulson lying on the embankment about 50 meters away.

"He came up to me and positioned his arm underneath my head. He didn't try to move me — he just put it beneath my head because my neck was starting to get tired holding my head up. We were face-to-face and he just started talking to me, trying to keep me calm," Paulson said.

With his back, hips and legs hurting and fearing he might pass out, Paulson described his pain to Werts so he could pass the information to emergency personnel. Nearby, Werts' wife stood by praying as their son called 911 and provided directions to the accident. Within 10 minutes, emergency medical services arrived.

Placing Paulson on a backboard and securing him, they had to grab his hips and straighten them out. The pain was "rough," Paulson said. As they carried him down and across the embankment and up the far side, Paulson felt every jolt. The paramedics loaded him into the ambulance and stabilized him for transportation, but they couldn't give him anything for his pain.

Because of his back injuries, Paulson was taken to St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Lafayette. The ride was agonizing, but the worst was yet to come. Placed in an MRI, he was told to hold his hands above his head, stretching his broken ribs and back. Minutes felt like hours during the ordeal. Only when the MRI was complete was he given pain medication and taken to the operating room.

That night, Paulson had an operation to repair the tremendous damage to his body. The surgeon placed two titanium rods along with screws and stabilizers across the top and bottom of his back. When he awoke the next day, it was to a new reality.

"I was paralyzed from the waist down. … Nothing moved, nothing worked," he said.

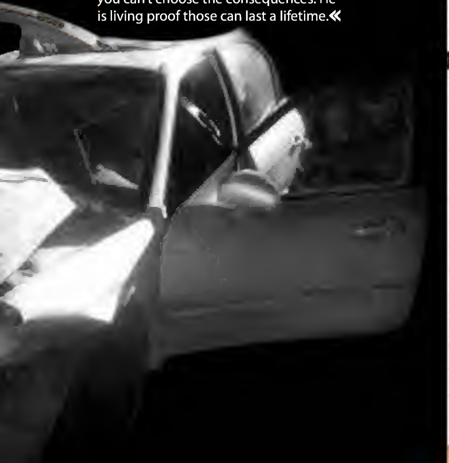
Paulson spent 29 days in the hospital and a much longer time recovering at home. Today, with the help of special supports for his legs and feet, he can again walk. Through great determination, he has returned to work for the Army and now helps train aviators in the survival skills they'll need should they be shot down. Paulson beat the odds of ever walking again, but his dreams of running marathons or flying Apaches have long since faded.

Looking back on the accident, Paulson accepts responsibility for his own decisions. He knows his decisions about drinking set him up for disaster.

d **INSIDE** the car,
OOF. Then **SOMETHING**
.”

"I should have been drinking less and sleeping more," he said. "Imagine how much better shape I could have been in if I'd been sleeping that night instead of drinking. I'm glad I'm the only person that I hurt. What if I had fallen asleep and gone onto the other side of the road and killed some kid — maybe some 17-year-old cheerleader? What if I'd killed some mother and her daughter because I fell asleep from trying to do too much and being out drinking the night before?"

The past is a closed book, but the future offers hope. Paulson believes Leaders, by sharing their own experiences, can show Soldiers that risks are real, not just imagined. And he hopes Soldiers will learn a vital lesson from his accident: While you can choose whether to be safe, you can't choose the consequences. He is living proof those can last a lifetime.«



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ARMY SAFE IS ARMY STRONG

along for the ride

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 HOWARD Y. ESTERBROOK
B Company, 1-171st Aviation Regiment
Schofield Barracks, Hawaii

The mission was to insert personnel into a landing zone (LZ) that was at 7,000 feet pressure altitude and 30 C. We reconned the LZ to determine the size, wind direction and approach path. Everything looked normal. As I started the approach for landing, things were going good until the last 30 feet. Then, my passengers and I were just "along for the ride."

Knowing we were heavy, I progressively brought in the power to terminate our approach when the aircraft suddenly began to drop. As I applied all power available, the rotor RPM started to droop. I pushed the cyclic forward to attempt a high-speed shallow approach, but subsequently bounced the aircraft twice and skidded about 20 feet until we finally came to rest. The aircraft landed with minimal input from me. Fortunately, nobody was hurt and the aircraft landed without a scratch. However, it scared the heck out of us.

When operating any type of vehicle, whether it's a helicopter, tactical vehicle or even your own privately owned vehicle (POV), the term "along for the ride" means just that; you are in a situation where you have little or no control of that vehicle and what's happening. This condition is most often self-induced or brought on by circumstances beyond your control. It is within our safety culture to identify and eliminate as many hazards as possible within our control, especially ones that we have created. In vehicle operations, we sometimes choose to ignore or forget

that our habits can cause unintended consequences.

In the incident described earlier in this article, we discovered afterward that we had incorrectly figured our weight, which ultimately affected the performance of the helicopter. I, as the pilot in command, had calculated the total weight of the aircraft, passengers and cargo incorrectly. I also had the co-pilot calculate our total weight, but I neglected to compare his numbers with mine, as we were in a hurry to take off. Besides, both of us had done this numerous times before, so it was OK (or so I thought). Our complacency had set us up for a situation that we would never forget.

Another incident occurred while I was driving home after visiting a friend. It was a rainy day with a lot of standing water on the road. As I neared my house, I took a wide turn off the freeway and found myself losing control of the car and skidding. Once again, I was "along for the ride" and ended up smacking the barrier.

I'm a good driver (or so I thought), so why did this happen to me? Once more, I got too comfortable driving on this off-ramp as I had done so many times before, including rainy days where nothing ever happened. Over time, I had neglected to adhere to the posted speed limit and gradually ignored the signs, as I was perfectly able to handle myself (or so I thought). This was yet another wake-up call. Getting comfortable and lazy had cost me again.

Sometimes, performing repetitious tasks can lead us to believe that we are always in control of any given situation. We forget we are human and subject to making mistakes. Complacency can set in when we choose to ignore or forget the fact that operating any type of vehicle or performing a task can be inherently risky. We should be ever vigilant in the operational environment, whether we are on or off duty, to assess the risks and take steps to reduce or eliminate them. Ask yourself if you are getting too comfortable with the situation and the vehicle you're operating. By doing this, you can help identify a situation where you may be setting up yourself to be complacent.

My experiences have taught me to never take things for granted when operating a vehicle, whether it is a helicopter, HMMWV, boat or POV. By performing a self-assessment in which I ask myself, "Am I getting too comfortable with operating this vehicle in this situation?" I have a chance to think for a moment and consider whether I might need to correct myself. Being aware of complacency will ultimately reduce the chances of your going "along for the ride." The payoff is that you will live to fly another day. Your co-workers, friends and loved ones will be glad you did.«

A Lesson Learned

STEPHEN SCHWARTZ
2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment
Qalat, Afghanistan

It was a good training day. We were conducting a command-sponsored train-the-trainer event for M-249/M-240B machine gun qualification tables to show subordinate unit Leaders what "right looks like." So far, we had executed well and "right" looked pretty good.

We started early in the morning with a huddle and went over the pre-execution checklist. All details were dispatched and completed on time. Following a safety and range procedures briefing and a quick preliminary marksmanship refresher training session, the range was "hot" by 0800 and we sent the first round downrange by 0830. Things were going well. Murphy must have been on leave because he certainly hadn't shown up today.

We conducted all of our firing tables, including the 10-meter zero/qualification, 100- to 800-meter day transitional and night transitional fire. More than 100 gunners and assistant gunners went through the course during the 10 hours of daylight, burning up more than 70,000 rounds. As nightfall approached, the range was still hot and lively. All pieces of the machine were hard at work with 10 lanes going.

Because of our shooters' inexperience, I posted a safety for each lane during the night fire, as part of our risk assessment and mitigation process. The assigned range safety officer (RSO) was doing a great job observing all moving parts forward of the firing line and regulating traffic.

Prior to going hot for night fire, I had held a short planning huddle to rehearse the shutdown and clearing of the range and recovery back in the rear. I could tell that everyone had put in a hard day's work and felt good about the training. Still, we were getting a little tired and looking forward to a hot shower and going to bed. I think that was around the time Murphy showed up.

We cleared the range with the RSO personally clearing each M-249 at a central point as the weapons came off the range. Somehow, one of the weapons made its way to the staging tables without being cleared. I personally oversaw the range-clearing execution and could see our RSO doing his job. However, someone didn't follow the route or proper procedure for clearing weapons off the range and brought an M-249 to the table with a round in the chamber.

Fortunately, when we conducted a second check on the weapons with their feed tray covers up, we spotted the round in the M-249. We avoided what could have been a fatal accident, but the experience left its mark on all of us. With more than 150 personnel buzzing around the range policing brass and tearing down equipment, had this weapon discharged, chances are someone would have been injured or killed.

That night we learned an important lesson: We are never immune to the dangers caused by complacency. We all joke that Murphy's Law gets in the way of every good plan just when the execution phase begins. However, I believe Murphy usually shows up when we let down our guard — like when we reward ourselves for our hard work before the mission is complete. We sometimes give ourselves and each other "attaboys" and forget that we're still in the fight. No matter how well an operation is going, if it's still going, anything can happen!

Our near miss taught us that being complacent and letting down our guard can lead to tragedy. Thankfully, we learned that lesson without it costing a Soldier's life.«

ARE YOU A SHARPSHOOTER?
RANGE & WEAPONS SAFETY TOOLBOX
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Welcome

The Range & Weapons Safety Toolbox contains information and tools related to the safe handling of privately owned weapons in addition to resources to establish and maintain effective range and weapons safety programs with military weapons.

CHECK IT OUT TODAY!

WHEN HE
Came to Brea

Larry Wade (a fictitious name to protect his privacy) was in a big hurry as he headed north on North Carolina State Highway 210. The road only offered one lane in each direction and, with lots of curves and hills, passing was a dicey proposition. Only rarely was there a broken line on his side of the road allowing him to legally pass.

LL

kfast

BOB VAN ELSBERG
Strategic Communication Directorate
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center
Fort Rucker, Ala.

But he wasn't in the mood for patience. In fact, any sense of personal safety or respect for the law was long gone that November morning. The sun had not yet come up as he gunned his car and repeatedly crossed the double yellow line to pass traffic. The road began to climb over a low hill and, eager to pass a couple of cars ahead of him, he once again cut into the oncoming lane. As he neared the top of the hill, he saw a light flicker on the horizon — but it wasn't the sunrise. In the southbound lane, Sgt. 1st Class John Kerns was switching to his low beams to avoid blinding the drivers approaching from the opposite side of the crest.

The oncoming headlights told Wade he was in the wrong place at the wrong time. Panicking, he swerved to the right to reenter his lane and, in the process, clipped the front bumper of the car he was passing. The impact sent Wade's Toyota Camry out of control off the right side of the road. Overcorrecting, Wade jerked the wheel to the left and sent his car sliding sideways into the southbound lane. Kerns, who was headed to Monday morning PT formation and then back home for breakfast, never had a chance to touch his brakes. It was 5:55 a.m. on Nov. 30, 2009, and hell had come to breakfast.

"He just appeared. All of a sudden, there was this car there and 'wham!'" Kerns said. "All I remember is a black flash (the car was black) that I thought was a station wagon until I found out later that it was a Toyota Camry. That just tells me it happened so quickly and suddenly that I couldn't tell, definitively, exactly what kind of car it was."

Kerns' Honda Civic hit the Camry on the passenger side just behind the front door. At a combined speed of more than 100 mph, the Civic sliced the Camry in half behind the front seat. The Camry's front half careened off the road into a ditch on Kerns' side of the road while the back half landed in a line of trees behind where he had stopped. Kerns was stunned by the violent impact.

He said, "I remember that I had my foot on the gas and still had the presence of mind to manipulate the brake. But, at that point, it didn't really matter because my wheels weren't rolling."

In fact, his car couldn't roll. The impact tore off the Civic's right-front tire and dropped the engine and transmission onto the road where they dragged against the asphalt until the car ground to a halt.

"The damage on the front of my car was such that I don't know what benefit the brakes would have offered at that point — but I was going through the motions," Kerns said.

Despite the severity of the impact, the Civic stood up pretty well. The dash and steering wheel were pushed back toward Kerns, but not to where the wheel touched his chest. Every air bag in the car had deployed and Kerns noted, with humor, that the inside of his car looked like a party at McDonalds. But he was alive and conscious.

"The first thing I did was a self-check," he said. "I looked around and thought, 'I'm still alive!' I had glass in my mouth and cuts on my face — I had blood on my face and arms. I remember pulling the parking brake and turning the key off and then I immediately got out of the car to assess the damage. When I did, the first thing that came to my mind was, 'My God, this looks like situations I have seen in Afghanistan and Iraq — this is like an IED attack!' I hadn't seen that kind of damage since working on main supply route Irish (a 12-kilometer stretch of highway in Baghdad). There were bits and pieces of this guy's car everywhere."

Pieces of both vehicles were strewn for at least 150 feet up and down the road and on the shoulder. The Camry's fuel tank lay in the southbound lane. Kerns looked around, amazed at the damage, and then started looking for the Camry's driver, who he felt might need first aid. But he didn't get far.

"I made it about three or four feet and couldn't breathe," he said. "My initial impact was starting to catch up with me and I took a knee and sat down. I remember lying back on the asphalt, looking up at the stars and pulling my phone out and calling 911. I said, 'I've been in an accident and we need ambulatory assistance. At least two people here are injured — maybe more.' The dispatcher asked me, 'Where are you?' I told her, 'I'm on Highway 210.' She kept asking, 'Where on 210?' I told her, 'Lady, just tell your ambulance to go until they find smoke and fire, because that's where we are.'"

The pain hadn't yet fully set in, but Kerns was feeling stiff and found it increasingly painful to get his breath. He declined an offer to be taken in an ambulance to a civilian hospital. Instead, not realizing the extent of his injuries, he called his supervisor and asked for a ride to work. As they drove toward Fort Bragg, the adrenaline began to wear off and the pain set in with full intensity.

"I never would have believed that a person could hurt quite that bad," he said.

Kerns asked his supervisor to take him to Womack Army Medical Center. When he arrived, he was immediately taken to the emergency room and examined. Doctors found he had suffered cracked ribs and bruised internal organs — particularly on the lower-right side of his abdomen where the seat belt and shoulder restraint crossed his body. Still, the pain from those injuries beat the alternative. Instead of being thrown through the windshield and killed, he survived and, although sore for a couple of weeks, returned to his unit after six days' quarters. Since then, Kerns has often contemplated what happened that day and the difference the safety systems in his car made in his survival.

"I thank God for air bags and seat belts," he said. "There is no doubt in my mind that they saved my life."

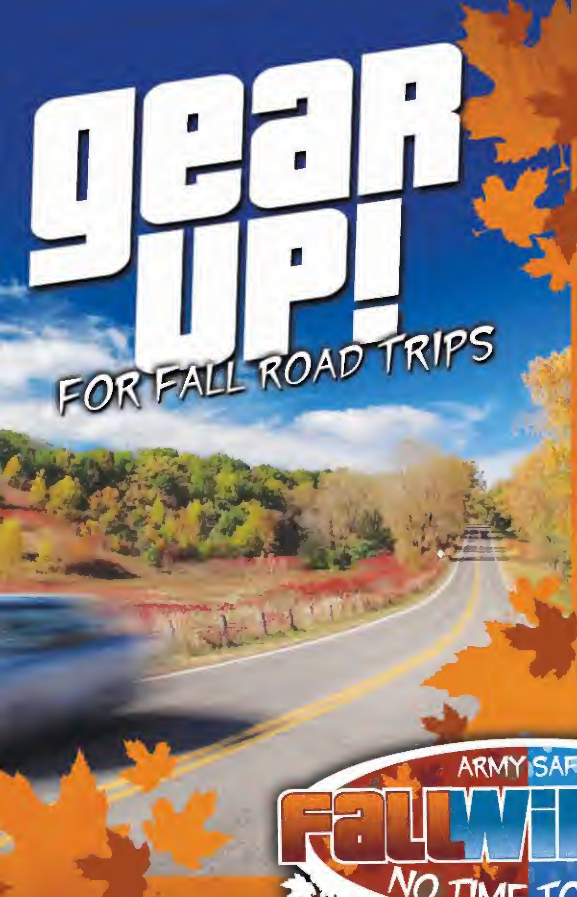
While Kerns was raised to use his seat belts, his accident made him even more committed to taking that extra couple of seconds to buckle up. His accident has only reinforced his appreciation for how modern restraint systems — particularly seat belts and air bags — can protect innocent drivers from the reckless actions of others on the road.

The accident has also led to Kerns having a different mindset when he gets behind the wheel. He knows he can do everything right and still be the victim of someone else's bad decisions. He no longer assumes other drivers won't do something dangerous, no matter how foolish. Now he searches the road for risks with increased intensity.

"We make a lot of assumptions throughout our daily lives," he said. "Driving down the road, I make the general assumption that the (other) car is not going to pull out in front of me. While I don't necessarily assume every car is going to do something like that, the thought crosses my mind a lot more now than it did before."«

GEAR UP!

FOR FALL ROAD TRIPS



- Plan trips ahead of time. Decide what time to leave and which roads to take. Try to avoid heavy traffic, poor weather and high-speed areas.

- Wear your seat belt correctly. (It should go over your shoulder and across your lap.)

- Drive at the speed limit. It's unsafe to drive too fast or too slow.

- Be alert! Pay attention to traffic at all times.

- Keep enough distance between you and the car ahead of you.

- Be extra careful at intersections. Use turn signals and remember to look around for people and other cars.

ARMY SAFE
FALL WINTER
NO TIME TO CHILL

A Minor

A while ago, while flying night vision system (NVS), I did something that made me quite unhappy. I had recently completed the AH-64A Instructor Pilot (IP) Course at the Western Army Aviation Training Site outside of Tucson, Ariz., and was eager to get in a couple of additional flight training periods before heading off to a long nonflying course. It had been almost two months since I'd flown at my home station and about that long since I had a backseat flight at night. In the Apache IP Course, most of the flying is performed from the front crew station.

That afternoon entailed a joint air attack training mission with local Air National Guard assets. I was crewed with a pilot in command during the afternoon, allowing me to reorient myself to the local area and the backseat. The plan was to turn around and fly with a junior pilot that evening on a day out/night return mission that would involve a standard local area flight scenario. We would next hit the local tactical training area, then one of our commonly used local airports and then reverse our route and perform our tasks at night.

We departed our airfield after changing aircraft due to a maintenance issue. We flew the route as intended with no issues. We hit the training area for some confined area approaches

Event

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 AARON T. KELLNER
Company A, 1/135th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion
Missouri Army National Guard
Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo.

and low-level flight. Then we flew over to the airport, performing standard airfield maneuvers. We then "systemed up" and performed a few more approaches and landings.

NVS flying isn't quite like riding a bicycle to me. Generally, when I haven't flown under NVS for more than a week or two, I need a little time to warm up. That was the purpose of the airfield work. I could get my crosscheck going under NVS and gain my feel for the aircraft before heading out to the training area at night.

We flew the pattern for a while and decided, due to time considerations, that heading to the tactical training area was the best idea. My front seater had the controls as we approached the tactical training area. Flying at about 1,200 feet above ground level (AGL) and 110 knots, I took the flight controls to facilitate a front-seat frequency change and radio call required upon entry into the training area.

After the radio call was complete, I initiated a slow descent to training area altitude. I reached down to change the UHF from an Air Traffic Information Service frequency back to a unit internal frequency. The cockpit lighting was inadequate and I fumbled for the preset switch, eventually having to look down to find it. I then looked to the other side of the cockpit for the lighting rheostat and back to the UHF preset after adjusting the lighting to make the frequency change.

At this time, I heard my front seater say with a sense of urgency, "Do you have that rate of descent?" I brought my head to the 12 o'clock position and saw a rate of descent well over 1,000 feet per minute and an AGL altitude of less than 400 feet. "Yeah, I've got it," I responded, keeping an even tone, trying to sound like I meant to induce the descent. I pulled out of the descent with plenty of altitude and no erratic control application and we continued the mission with no issues.

From the time of this minor event until this day, I have to wonder what could have happened. What if it wasn't the first time we flew together and we were comfortable with each other's flying? What if my front seater was a little more timid and didn't speak up, believing more in my abilities and judgment than her own? What if we didn't do a full mission brief, emphasizing the free flow of aircraft and mission information? Perhaps I would have caught the descent in plenty of time. I probably would have … but maybe not. This very minor event could have turned into something much worse.«

run for your life

1ST SGT. SCOTT THIERET
B Company, 1st Battalion, 134th Aviation Company
Missouri Army National Guard
Jefferson City, Mo.

During my 20-year military career, I — like a lot of Soldiers — have had many titles. From aircraft mechanic to supervisor and private to first sergeant, I've held them all. However, despite which hat I was wearing at the time, safely accomplishing the mission was always at the forefront of every job.

I feel the Army has made me an excellent steward of safety. On the job, one oversight could destroy a multi-million-dollar aircraft or, even worse, claim Soldiers' lives. However, I did not realize the value of safety until the past few years.

For years, I did not put much emphasis on using personal protective equipment (PPE) at home. Yeah, wearing it on the job was mandatory, but who needed PPE at home? What's the worst that could happen?

After leading by example on the job for years, I figured now, since I have children, I needed to lead by example at home as well. My old attitude of "I'm just going to make this one cut with the saw without using safety glasses and hearing protection" had to change. Even though wearing PPE can be cumbersome, it allows my little girls to see daddy doing the right thing. Sure, they ask a thousand questions about why I wear it; but taking the time to explain only reinforces the importance and teachings of doing the right thing.

While protecting my sight, hearing and extremities has always been important to me, I never gave much thought into protecting my body as a whole. A close encounter with a car while on my morning jog served as a wake-up call. Here's what happened:

As usual, my alarm went off at 4:30 a.m. I got out of bed and dressed in my most comfortable jogging attire. It was a cool morning, so I wore a sweatshirt, stocking cap and gloves. I then stretched and headed out the door with everything I needed — or so I thought.

About 20 minutes into my run, I noticed a car approaching from behind. I glanced over my right shoulder and moved as far to the left side of the street as possible. I thought for sure the driver saw me; but when I looked over my

DID YOU KNOW?

According to Army Regulation 385-10, wearing portable listening devices such as MP3 players is prohibited while jogging/running, bicycling or skating/skateboarding on or adjacent to roadways or roadway intersections on Department of Defense installations.

right shoulder again, I realized I was in the car's direct path.

With the car about 30 yards away and quickly closing in, I decided to run off the roadway into the grass. Just as my feet hit the grass, the car sped by, nearly hitting me. After a few choice words aimed at the driver, I took a moment to catch my breath. It was then I realized something; I was not wearing my reflective belt. Was it possible the driver never even saw me?

I was lucky. This simple oversight to wear my reflective belt could have been catastrophic for me and my family. After closely evaluating my mistake, I changed how I prepare for my morning run. I now ensure all necessary items are identified and placed in clear sight the night before so I don't forget anything.

So what was it that made me forget to wear my reflective belt? Could it have been complacency? Was I tired? Or was it just poor planning and lack of composite risk management? I believe it was a combination of all of these things. Whatever the case may be, sometimes all it takes is a close call to get your head back into the game.«

FYI

In addition to wearing bright-colored and reflective gear, you should run against the flow of traffic. This will help you see potential problems up ahead and increase your chances of avoiding an accident.

UFO

Unrestrained Flying Object

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 BILL HUTCHENS
B Company, 1st Brigade, 82nd Attack Reconnaissance Battalion
Fort Bragg, N.C.

It was just after morning formation and I was on my way to an appointment. As I pulled out of the airfield, I found myself behind a very slow driver. We stopped at a red light and, when it turned green, she just sat there. I tapped my horn and she finally began moving. I followed her through a left-hand turn and, because I felt she was driving erratically, passed her. Continuing to watch her in my rearview mirror, I saw her come to a complete stop for a blinking yellow caution light.

I continued down the road and stopped at a red light. When I glanced again in my rearview mirror, I saw her quickly approaching and realized she wasn't going to stop. I looked down and saw I wasn't wearing my seat belt. All I could think to do was lean back in my seat and prepare for the impact.

The woman never braked and slammed into me at full speed, causing my air bag to deploy. However, without my seat belt to restrain me, my head hit the air bag and went around its right side and struck the dash next to the stereo. To make matters worse, the previous night I'd tried to remove my truck's stereo. Unfortunately, the metal rods I'd been using to pry the stereo out were still sticking out of its sides. One of the metal rods scraped the left side of my forehead, temple and ear and caused a nasty gash. Looking back, I realize how lucky I was that I did not lose an eye.

I got out of the truck, my adrenaline pumping so hard I didn't notice the gash or the blood coming out it. When I went back to check on the lady who hit me, her teenage daughter got out. She immediately began apologizing and told me her mother was taking several prescription drugs.

My truck was totaled. When she rear-ended me, she pushed me into the vehicle ahead. Fortunately, no one was injured and they only suffered some minor damage to their rear bumper. After the police arrived, they filled out the accident reports and ticketed the woman. An emergency medical technician cleaned the blood off the side of my head and asked if I needed an ambulance. I told him I didn't, but later I had my wife take me to the emergency room.

“From a **SAFETY** standpoint, there were **MANY THINGS** I **SHOULD** have done **DIFFERENTLY**.”

Although I was extremely sore for a few weeks after the accident, I was thankful my injuries were so minor.

From a safety standpoint, there were many things I should have done differently. I should have put my seat belt on immediately after I got into my vehicle. If I'd been wearing it, it would have kept me in the proper position to benefit from my air bag. Instead, I became a UFO (unrestrained flying object) headed for a nasty collision with the dash. When I noticed the woman was a hazard on the road, I should have immediately called and reported her. That might have caused her to be stopped, which would have prevented the accident. Finally, leaving sharp objects protruding from the dash or lying loose inside a vehicle is never a good idea. In a crash, they can cause serious — even deadly — injuries.

Before you get on the road, make sure you've done all you can to protect yourself and others riding with you. Most importantly, before you back out, buckle up. You won't have time to reach for your seat belt when an approaching driver's grill suddenly fills your rearview mirror. «

Coulda, Shoulda, Woulda

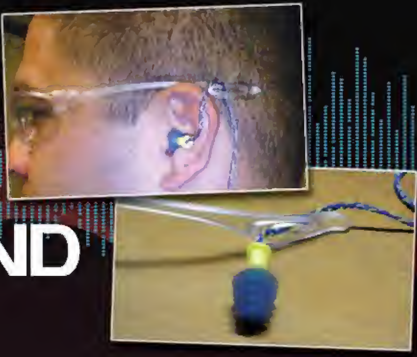
COMPILED BY THE KNOWLEDGE STAFF

How many times have we heard someone say, "I should have done this" or "I could have done that," after they had done something else or, perhaps, nothing at all. The same applies to the word "would." Too often, unfortunately, we hear those words after an accident occurs. Think a minute the next time you hear or say the following statements:

- I should have checked the weather more closely before we left.
- I should have taken a bit more time checking the condition and the rigging of the sling load.
- I could have cleared the trees coming out of that confined area if I'd had a bit more power.
- I would have planned the flight differently if the "head shed" hadn't put pressure on me to get the mission accomplished.
- I could have made it with a bit more fuel.
- I would have written up that anomaly, but we needed to complete the maintenance and get the aircraft up.
- I should have made sure my passengers were properly briefed.
- I should have spoken up when I realized the mission would extend well beyond my crew day.
- I should have known the dust would cause a brownout.
- I should have known that loose towel would get airborne.
- I should have told him about the rotor blades.
- I would have worn my survival vest, but it was just a routine mission.
- I should have checked the survival radios.

Hindsight is great for lessons learned, but foresight is the key to accident prevention. Identifying hazards and developing and implementing controls to eliminate or reduce risks before and throughout the mission are the best ways to avoid lamenting what you "coulda, shoulda or woulda" done after a painful accident. Turn your coulda, shoulda, woulda statements into control measures before an accident happens.«

SIGHT AND SOUND



FRANK MCCLANAHAN
Civilian Task Force
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center
Fort Rucker, Ala.

Each year, thousands of people are blinded by work-related eye injuries. An employee from Corpus Christi Army Depot, Texas, recently shared a safety tip to prevent on-the-job injuries.

For those required to wear both eye and ear protection as part of their duties, they can don protective eyewear such as that shown in the photograph above. This combination of eye and ear protection is designed to keep both devices readily available to the user, as well as keep the earplugs untangled. The earplug cord also serves as a lanyard, allowing the user to wear the eye protection around the neck until needed.

Besides convenience, the employee stated that this combination device prevents discarded earplugs from creating foreign object damage to aircraft engines. There are numerous variations on this concept, including protective eyewear which has the hearing protection mounted on hinges that can be folded away from the ear when not needed; protective eyewear with earmuffs attached; and hard hats that have both eye and ear protection attached.

No matter how routine the task or low the risk, always wear the proper eye and ear protection for the job. It's your best defense against an accidental injury or loss. Remember, the best piece of personal protective equipment is the one you actually wear.«

DID YOU KNOW?

Workplace eye injuries result in more than $300 million per year in lost production, medical expenses and worker's compensation. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 22 million workers are exposed to hazardous noises on the job, and an additional 9 million are at risk for hearing loss from other agents such as solvents and metals.

LOST

AVIATION

AH-64D

CLASS A

- The aircraft crashed into terrain during unit night high-altitude mountain environmental training.

CLASS B

- The flight crew conducted emergency procedures after detecting the smell of smoke in the cockpit, followed by the transmission chip light illuminating. The main rotor blades (MRBs) contacted trees during the descent, causing damage to all four blades.

CH-47D

CLASS B

- The aircraft was flown to a fairground for static display when its rotor wash blew over a tent, resulting in injuries to several spectators on the ground.

CLASS C

- The left-side emergency exit door separated during flight. The crew landed without further incident and recovered the damaged door.

CH-47F

CLASS A

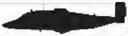
- The crew experienced engine failure during short final at about 200 feet above ground level (AGL) and then contacted a ground obstacle.

MH-60L

CLASS A

- While on short final to the taxiway, a vehicle pulled in front of the aircraft. The pilot on the controls (PC) immediately stopped forward movement to avoid impact with the vehicle. After the vehicle moved a safe distance away from the aircraft, the PC landed the aircraft. On postflight, the crew discovered the MRBs had contacted the ALQ-144, resulting in the replacement of all four blades.

C-23C



CLASS D

- While flying straight and level on a parachute drop mission, a medium-sized bird struck the forward portion of the fuselage. The crew completed the lift and returned to the airfield. During inspection of the aircraft, the crew discovered damage to the radome.

UAS

A160

CLASS A

- The unmanned aircraft (UA) experienced loss of power turbine speed (NP) during an in-flight fuel transfer. The UA was placed in autorotation mode but contacted the ground tail-first and slid on its side 50 feet.

LOSSES AVIATION

Class A/Fatalities as of Oct. 5, 2010

ATTACK	2/1
RECON	4/4
UTILITY	8/11
CARGO	4/0
TRAINING	0/0
FIXED-WING	3/0
UAS	6/0
TOTAL	27/16

RQ-7B

CLASS B

- The UA experienced a spike in operating temperature and then engine failure. The recovery chute deployed, but the UA was never located.

CLASS C

- The UA operator experienced a GEN/IGNITION FAIL indication, followed by loss of RPM. The recovery chute deployed and the UA was recovered with damage.

GROUND

Other

CLASS A

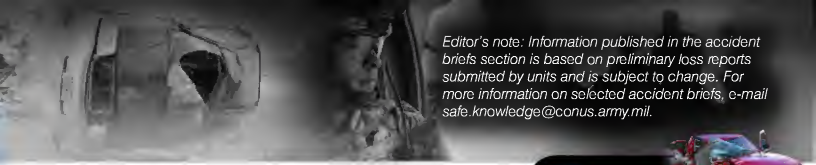
- A Department of the Army Civilian was killed when the forklift he was performing maintenance on fell off its jack stands, pinning him underneath.

Personnel Injury

CLASS A

- A Soldier drowned when he jumped into the water to help another Soldier recover a fishing boat that had drifted away from the dock.

- A Soldier died after he fell from a cliff during combat operations.



Editor's note: Information published in the accident briefs section is based on preliminary loss reports submitted by units and is subject to change. For more information on selected accident briefs, e-mail safe.knowledge@conus.army.mil.

- A Soldier drowned when his combat logistics patrol convoy was caught in a flash flood. The Soldier was swept away as he tried to climb out of his Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle to seek higher ground.

- A Soldier drowned when he lost his footing and was swept downstream as his team crossed a river.

- A Soldier died after he was pinned under a panel that fell from a radar system he was working on.

Explosive/Fire

CLASS A

- A Soldier was killed and another Soldier was injured when an unknown explosive detonated as they were inventorying ammunition at a holding facility.

CLASS B

- An MRAP was damaged when it caught fire while being towed following a radiator fan belt failure.

LOSSES GROUND

Class A/Fatalities
as of Oct. 5, 2010

AMV	17/7
ACV	12/10
PERSONNEL INJURY includes weapons-handling accidents	31/27
FIRE/ EXPLOSIVE	6/3
PROPERTY DAMAGE	2/0
TOTAL	68/47

- A Soldier had three fingers amputated at the first joint when he lost his grip on a live 60 mm round and it fell down a gun tube and detonated.

DRIVING

POV

CLASS A

- An unbelted Soldier was partially ejected and crushed by his SUV when he lost control in an "S" turn, left the road and overturned.

- An unbelted Soldier died when he was partially ejected from one of the car's windows as it overturned after leaving the road.

- An unbelted Soldier was thrown through his windshield and killed when he lost control of his SUV, went off the road and flipped over a guard rail.

- A Soldier was killed when his vehicle struck a parked trailer in a marked construction zone.

- Two Soldiers died when the rented vehicle they were riding in hit a pothole, went out of control and struck a tree.

POM

CLASS A

- A Soldier was killed when he struck a civilian van whose driver had violated right of way at a T-intersection. The Soldier, who suffered severe spinal injuries, was transported to a hospital for treatment, but later died.

LOSSES POV/POM

Class A/Fatalities
as of Oct. 5, 2010

CAR	39/40
SUV/JEEP	10/11
TRUCK	8/9
MOTORCYCLE	43/40
PEDESTRIAN	12/13
OTHER* *Includes vans and ATVs	3/3
TOTAL	115/116

Fiscal Year 2009: 110 Three Year Average: 118

- A Soldier died when he lost control of his motorcycle, fell off and was struck by a car.

- A Soldier was leading a group of riders at high speed when he failed to negotiate a turn, hit a stop sign and was killed.

- A Soldier died after an accident where he had gotten ahead of the group of riders he was with and crashed in a turn.

- A Soldier is being maintained on life support after he failed to negotiate a turn, struck a guardrail and was thrown from his bike.

- A Soldier died after his motorcycle struck a guardrail and he was thrown to the ground.

Pedestrian

CLASS A

- A Soldier was killed by a hit-and-run driver while conducting personal physical fitness training.

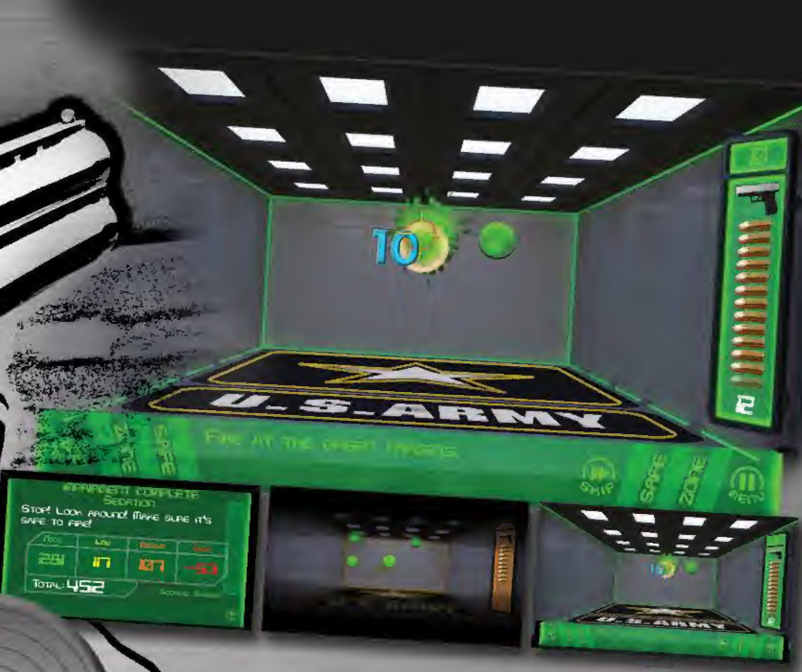
TAKE THE CHALLENGE, LEARN THE LESSON.

FIREARMS

safety techniques

GIVE IT A SHOT!

Visit https://safety.army.mil/firearm-safet
and get on target today



Stop! Look around! Make sure it's safe to fire!

Total: 452

Firearms Safety Techniques, an interactive site, is available for Soldiers, Family members and Civilians to learn about off-duty safe firearms handling. Visit the site for more useful firearms safety resources.

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https://safety.army.mil

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LEADERS, SOLDIERS AND FAMILIES:

MANAGE YOUR RISK

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Check out the USACR/Safety Center tools, products and applications that will not only help make you safer, but also educate your Soldiers, Civilians and Families on the fundamentals of safety.

U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER

Family

MMP

GRAT

Leader's Corner

MRAP SAFETY AWARENESS

POV TOOLBOX

POM TOOLBOX

RANGE & WEAPONS SAFETY TOOLBOX

Driver's Training Toolbox

Peer to Peer

ARAP

TRAVEL RISK TRiPS PLANNING SYSTEM

KNOWLEDGE

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